INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION

Second Meeting of the Africa - Indian Ocean Aviation System Planning and Implementation Group (AASPG/2)

Livingstone, Zambia, 2 - 6 November 2026

Agenda Item 4: Implementation of safety and air navigation goals, targets and indicators, including priorities set in the Regional Aviation Safety and Air Navigation Plans

Enhancing Regional Civil–Military Collaboration in Aircraft Accident Investigation Across the African Indian Ocean Region

Presented by Uganda

SUMMARY
Civil and military aviation operations routinely share the same airspace across the AFI Region, creating opportunities for enhanced collaboration in support of aviation safety. While many States face challenges in maintaining effective aircraft accident and incident investigation capabilities, military organizations often possess specialized expertise, equipment, and resources that can support investigations. Strengthened civil-military collaboration can enhance investigation effectiveness, optimize resource utilization, and support the implementation of ICAO Annex 13. This paper highlights opportunities to leverage military expertise and resources to strengthen aircraft accident and incident investigation capabilities across the AFI region. Action by the Meeting **in paragraph 3.**

Reference(s)	• Convention on International Civil Aviation (Chicago Convention), Article 26; • ICAO Annex 13 — Aircraft Accident and Incident Investigation; • ICAO Annex 19 — Safety Management; • ICAO Doc 9756 — Manual of Aircraft Accident and Incident Investigation; • ICAO Doc 9946 — Manual on Regional Accident and Incident Investigation Organization (RAIO); • ICAO Doc 10088 — Manual on Civil-Military Cooperation in Air Traffic Management (CIMACT); • ICAO Global Aviation Safety Plan (GASP); • ICAO Global Air Navigation Plan (GANP).
Strategic Goals	A - Every Flight is Safe and Secure

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Aircraft accident and incident investigations play a critical role in the continuous improvement of aviation safety through the identification of safety deficiencies and the prevention of recurrence. ICAO Annex 13 establishes the international framework for their conduct and promotes cooperation among States.

1.2. Civil and military aircraft routinely operate within the same airspace across the AFI region and are supported by interconnected aviation infrastructure and services. In this context, enhanced civil-military cooperation presents an opportunity to strengthen investigation capabilities through appropriate national arrangements and regional coordination mechanisms.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1. Despite significant progress in strengthening aviation safety oversight systems across the AFI Region, many States continue to face shortages of qualified investigators, limited access to specialized equipment and insufficient logistical support. Difficulties in accessing occurrence sites, particularly in remote or hard-to-reach-areas, and in mobilizing personnel and resources can affect the timeliness and effectiveness of investigations, thereby delaying the identification of causes and contributing factors and where appropriate, the issuance of safety recommendations.

2.2. Military organizations possess capabilities that can complement those of the civil accident investigation authorities. These include air transport assets, search and rescue resources, secure communications systems, surveillance data, geospatial intelligence, engineering expertise, unmanned aircraft systems and specialized recovery equipment including for underwater operations. Military support may also include medical examinations through military healthcare facilities and the provision of hangars and other facilities for the secure storage and preservation of wreckage, components and other evidence.

2.3. Access to these capabilities can help overcome the operational, logistical and technical constraints identified above, facilitate timely access to occurrence sites and support the effective conduct of investigations.

2.4. Formal arrangements should define the conditions under which military assistance may be provided while maintaining the independence of the civil accident investigation authority in accordance with ICAO Annex 13. They should also identify areas in which civil-military cooperation may be required, beyond the provision of personnel, assets and technical support, including occurrence site security, evidence preservation and, where necessary, access to or relocation of wreckage from restricted-access areas while safeguarding evidence integrity. Such arrangements should further provide for consultation, information exchange and coordination when a civil aircraft accident or incident involves a military aircraft or results from military activities, including where separate civil and military investigations are conducted, while preserving the independence of each investigation.

2.5. States may further strengthen their preparedness by establishing formal civil-military coordination arrangements, maintaining inventories of available support resources, conducting joint training activities and promoting the exchange of expertise and lessons learned.

2.6. Existing regional mechanisms may also be leveraged to support technical cooperation and mutual assistance among States.

3. ACTION BY THE MEETING

3.1. The meeting is invited to:

3.1.1. encourage States to establish or strengthen formal civil-military coordination mechanisms and procedures to facilitate the timely provision of military assets, technical expertise, logistical support and specialized equipment in support of civil aircraft accident and incident investigations, while preserving the independence of the accident investigation authority in accordance with ICAO Annex 13;

3.1.2. encourages States to conduct joint civil-military training programmes, workshops and exercises aimed at enhancing preparedness, interoperability and cooperation during accident and incident investigations; and

3.1.3. request ICAO, in coordination with States and relevant regional organizations, to promote the establishment of a regional inventory of accident investigation expertise and specialized equipment; and

3.1.4. request ICAO to facilitate capacity-building initiatives and the exchange of best practices relating to civil-military cooperation in aircraft accident and incident investigations within the AFI region.

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